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PHOTO RELEASE: Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$1 Million to Town of Millbury to Address Climate Change Impacts



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MILLBURY – Governor Charlie Baker and Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Kathleen Theoharides today joined state and local officials to award a \$1 million grant to the Town of Millbury for a climate change adaption project, part of \$12 million [awarded](#) to communities throughout the Commonwealth through the [Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness \(MVP\) Program](#). Additionally, Governor Baker spoke about the need for his [Resilient MA legislation](#) to provide a dedicated, sustainable funding source to invest in important local climate change resilience projects like Millbury's.

“Massachusetts has been a national leader in addressing climate change, and these grants represent the Commonwealth's largest funding commitment ever to improving community resiliency,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “We look forward to working with our legislative colleagues to pass our bill to continue important initiatives like the MVP program to mitigate climate change, build more resilient communities, protect residents and natural resources, and help generate economic growth and innovation throughout the Commonwealth.”

“Our Administration is committed to partnering with cities and towns to develop practical and cost-effective solutions to build the climate-resilient communities of tomorrow,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. “We are proud to support this important climate resilience project in Millbury and many others across the Commonwealth that will foster stronger communities and improve the environment.”

The Town of Millbury received a \$1 million grant for the Armory Village Green Infrastructure Project. As part of a larger downtown revitalization effort, the project will reduce flooding and stormwater runoff to the Blackstone River through the use of green infrastructure like stormwater planters, bioretention bump-outs, rain gardens, tree box filters, tree planting and porous pavement.

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' MVP grant and designation program, which builds on Governor Baker's Executive Order 569 as well as other administration-led state and local partnerships, provides communities with technical support, climate change data and planning tools to identify hazards and develop strategies to improve resilience. This funding is part of the largest release of climate change resilience funding for Massachusetts communities in state history.

“The record participation in the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program underscores the real need for climate-smart solutions that promote strong local economies while reducing risks and avoiding future costs,” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides**. “The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to supporting municipalities in getting this work off the ground through the ResilientMA legislation, which would provide a new and sustained funding source for climate resilience projects.”

Through the MVP Program, municipalities identify key climate-related hazards, vulnerabilities and strengths, develop adaptation actions and prioritize next steps. Results of the workshops and planning efforts inform existing local plans, grant applications, and policies. Communities are then eligible for competitive MVP Action Grant funding to implement priority on-the-ground projects. With this announcement, 71 percent of Commonwealth communities have received MVP Planning Grants, while 70 climate change resilience projects have received MVP Action Grants.

Of the \$12 million awarded, \$1.7 million was awarded to 65 communities to pursue a community-led planning process to identify vulnerabilities to climate change and priority actions. The remaining \$10.3

million was awarded to 34 communities that had completed the planning process and are ready to implement projects that build local resilience to climate change impacts.

“While Massachusetts continues to be a leader in pursuing clean energy options, it’s also important to help communities identify opportunities to reduce risks and to build resilience against potential threats such as extreme weather and climate-related hazards,” **said Senator Michael Moore (D-Millbury), who previously served as an Environmental Police Officer.** “This funding through the MVP program will go a long way to help my hometown of Millbury adapt to climate change, and to implement recommendations previously identified by the community.”

“This is a terrific project the state is investing in with Millbury which has multiple positive impacts for the environment, public safety, handicap accessibility, economic development and downtown revitalization,” **said State Representative Paul Frost (R-Auburn).** “I express my appreciation to the Baker-Polito Administration and Secretary Kathleen Theoharides of Energy and Environmental Affairs for their support of this grant program and recognizing how this can make a difference for Millbury’s downtown.”

Governor Baker filed the [Resilient MA legislation](#) to support municipalities and help protect Massachusetts residents, communities, economy, natural resources and infrastructure from the adverse effects of climate change, through an increase in the excise on real estate transfers to fund a substantial and sustained investment in climate change adaptation through programs like MVP. The revenue would be directed towards investments in resilient infrastructure to help make communities safer, keep vital services online, reduce the long-term costs of climate-related risks and protect the value of property across the Commonwealth. The proposal is estimated to generate \$1.3 billion over 10 years which would be deposited into the Commonwealth’s Global Warming Solutions Trust Fund to support municipalities and regional municipal partnerships through loans, grants and technical assistance to implement priority adaptation projects.

The MVP program implements Executive Order 569, which established an integrated strategy for climate change adaptation across the Commonwealth. Local climate change vulnerabilities and actions identified through the MVP program inform the [Statewide Hazard Mitigation and Adaptation Plan](#) – a blueprint to protect residents, communities, and local economies. The funding available through the MVP program builds upon the Baker-Polito Administration’s continued commitment to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

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